

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (currently amended): A process for preparing a pet's chew from thermoplastic starch comprising

- preparing a mixture consisting of a starch and/or starch derivative, a plasticizer, water and a fibrous material and one or more optional additives selected from the group consisting of, mono- or di-glycerides, lecithin, oils, fats, fatty acids or salts thereof, filler materials, vitamins, coloring agents, aromas, sweeteners and taste enhancers;

- converting said mixture into a thermoplastic starch; and
- moulding the thermoplastic starch into the desired pet's chew,

wherein the starch derivative is a chemically modified starch, wherein said mixture comprises an amount of the starch derivative of from 15 to 90 wt.%, based on dry solid weight of the mixture, and wherein said mixture comprises an amount of the plasticizer of from 15 to 35 wt.%, based on dry solid weight of the mixture.

2. (original): A process according to claim 1, wherein the chemically modified starch is an oxidized starch, starch ester, starch ether, hydrolysed or partially hydrolysed starch or crosslinked starch.

3. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the chemically modified starch is a hydroxyalkylated, carboxymethylated, acetylated starch or acid hydrolysed starch.

4. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the starch derivative is a potato, wheat, corn, tapioca, rice or pea starch derivative.

5. (currently amended): A process according to claim 1, wherein the mixture further comprises a native starch or a physically modified and/or a hydrolyzed starch, and/or a second chemically modified starch.

6. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the plasticizer is selected from the group consisting of polyols, esters of citric acid and urea.

7. (original): A process according to claim 6, wherein the plasticizer is glycerol.

8. (canceled)

9. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the fibrous material is selected from the group consisting of cellulose, hemp, coconut, grass, flax, potato and other natural fibers.

10. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the fibrous material is present in the mixture in an amount of from 1 to 35 wt.%, based on the dry solid weight of the mixture.

11. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the fibrous material consists of fibers having a length between 23 and 2000 μm .

12. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the mixture comprises water in an amount of from 7 to 35 wt.%, based on the total weight of the mixture.

13. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the mixture further comprises a branched polysaccharide, a malto-oligosaccharide, or a combination thereof.

14. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the mixture further comprises one or more additives selected from the group consisting of, mono- or di-glycerides, lecithin, oils, fats, fatty acids or salts thereof, filler materials, vitamins, coloring agents, aromas, sweeteners and taste enhancers.

15. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the mixture is converted into a thermoplastic starch by extrusion at a temperature of from 95 to 180°C.

16. (previously presented): A process according to claim 15, wherein the thermoplastic starch is extruded through a mesh having a pore size of from 1 to 5 mm and cut to produce a granulate material.

17. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the moisture content of the thermoplastic starch is conditioned to 5 to 20 wt.%, based on the total weight of the thermoplastic starch.

18. (previously presented): A process according to claim 1, wherein the thermoplastic starch is moulded by injection moulding at a temperature ranging from 80 to 200°C, into a mould of suitable shape and size.

19. (previously presented): A pet's chew obtainable by a process according to claim 1.

20. (previously presented): A pet's chew according to claim 19 having the form of a dog chew, or which is a bar or is hollow or is of natural shape.

21. (previously presented): A pet's chew according to claim 13, wherein the branched polysaccharide is a gum.

22. (previously presented): A pet's chew according to claim 13, wherein the malto-oligosaccharide is maltose.